

Caolan language

Caolan, sometimes *Man Cao Lan*, is a Tai language of northern Vietnam. It is spoken by the Cao Lan subgroup of the San Chay people; the Sán Chay proper speak a form of Chinese. According to Pittayaporn (2009), it is closest to the Chongzuo and Shangsi Zhuang across the border in China, both of which are lumped under the apparently polyphyletic Yongnan Zhuang by *Ethnologue*. Together, Caolan, Chongzuo, and Shangsi form a primary branch of the Tai languages (Pittayaporn 2009).

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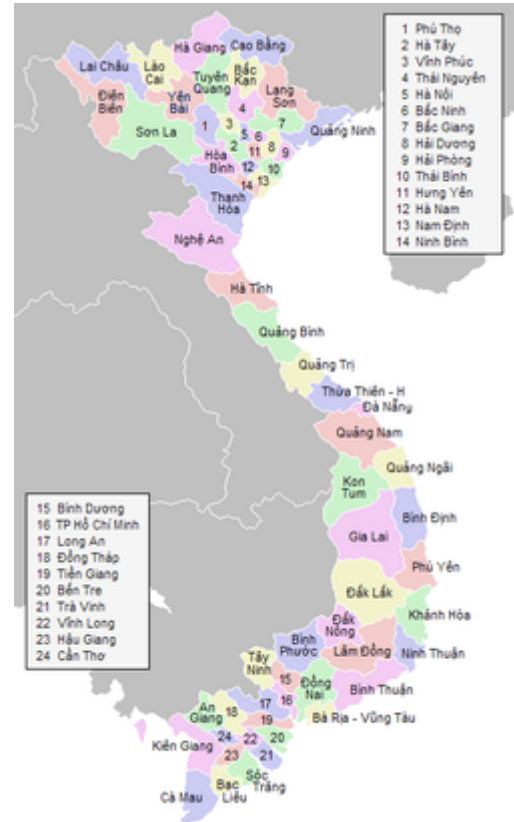
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Demographics



Provinces of Vietnam

Cao Lan	
<i>Man Cao-Lan</i>	
Native to	Vietnam
Native speakers	170,000 (2009 census) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Kra–Dai<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tai<ul style="list-style-type: none">mixed Northern Tai–Central Tai<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cao Lan</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	mlc
Glottolog	caol1238 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/caol1238) ^[2]

Caolan is spoken by the Cao Lan-Sán Chay people of Tuyên Quang Province. According to the people, the Cao Lan and Sán Chay peoples had arrived from southern China 400 years ago together as one group, even though they spoke two different languages. Notably, they both use Chinese characters to record their languages. Smaller numbers are also found in the following provinces (Gregerson & Edmondson 1998).

- Yên Bái
- Thái Nguyên
- Vĩnh Phúc
- Bắc Giang
- Lạng Sơn
- Quảng Ninh

Classification

The Sán Chay speak a form of Han Chinese, while the Cao Lan speak a Tai language. Gregerson & Edmondson (1998) considers Caolan to have a combination of both Northern Tai and Central Tai features. Like the E language of northern Guangxi, Cao Lan also displays influences from Pinghua, a

Chinese vernacular spoken in Guangxi, China. Haudricourt (1973) believes that the Cao Lan may have adopted a form of Tai when they had stopped in Guangxi during their historical southward migration. The Chinese-speaking Sán Chay, on the other hand, might have been a Yao (or Mienic-speaking) group, as the Yao of Fangcheng, Guangxi call themselves *san˧ tɕai˧*. Today, the Chinese-speaking Sán Chay live mostly in Quảng Ninh, whereas the Cao Lan are mostly concentrated in Tuyên Quang, Thái Nguyên, and Bắc Giang.

References

1. Cao Lan (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/mlc/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
 2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Cao Lan" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/caol1238>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
- Gregerson, Kenneth J., and Jerold A. Edmondson. 1998. *Some puzzles in Cao Lan* (<http://sealang.net/sala/archives/pdf8/gregerson1998puzzles.pdf>). University of Texas at Arlington.
 - Nguyễn Nam Tiến (1975). "Lại bàn về mối quan hệ giữa hai nhóm Cao Lan - Sán Chỉ". In, Ủy ban khoa học xã hội Việt Nam: Viện dân tộc học. *Về vấn đề xác định thành phần các dân tộc thiểu số ở miền bắc Việt Nam*, 274-286. Hà Nội: Nhà xuất bản khoa học xã hội.

External links

- The classification of the Caolan languages (<http://sealang.net/sala/archives/pdf8/strecker1985classification.pdf>) (David Strecker)
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